Natural Hazards Research Australia

T7-A1 **Online brief:** 19 November 12pm (AEDT)

Multi-hazard public information and warning platforms for the future

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Natural Hazards Research Australia acknowledges the First Nations owners of the land where we respectively live and work.

REFLECT RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

@murramarang_arts

What we'll cover

- → Introductions
- → Information about NHRA
- → Project background and objectives
- → Project outputs
- → Governance and reporting
- → EOI process
- → Question time

Introductions

Katelyn Samson
Deputy Director
Resilience and Risk Reduction, AIDR

Carla Mooney
Manager | Social Science and Service Policy, Bureau of Meteorology

Renee Meier
Manager | Public Information and Warnings Unit
State Operations Directorate, Queensland Fire Department

Justin Fowler
Public Information Officer | Public Information and Warnings Unit
State Operations, Queensland Fire Department

Please introduce yourself in the chat

- → The Centre commenced operating on 1 July 2021:
  - $85 million over 10 years from the Commonwealth
  - Plus participant contributions
- → The core objectives of the Centre are to:
  - Protect human life and minimise harm and suffering
  - Contribute to developing and supporting well-prepared and resilient communities
  - Invest in research that translates into action

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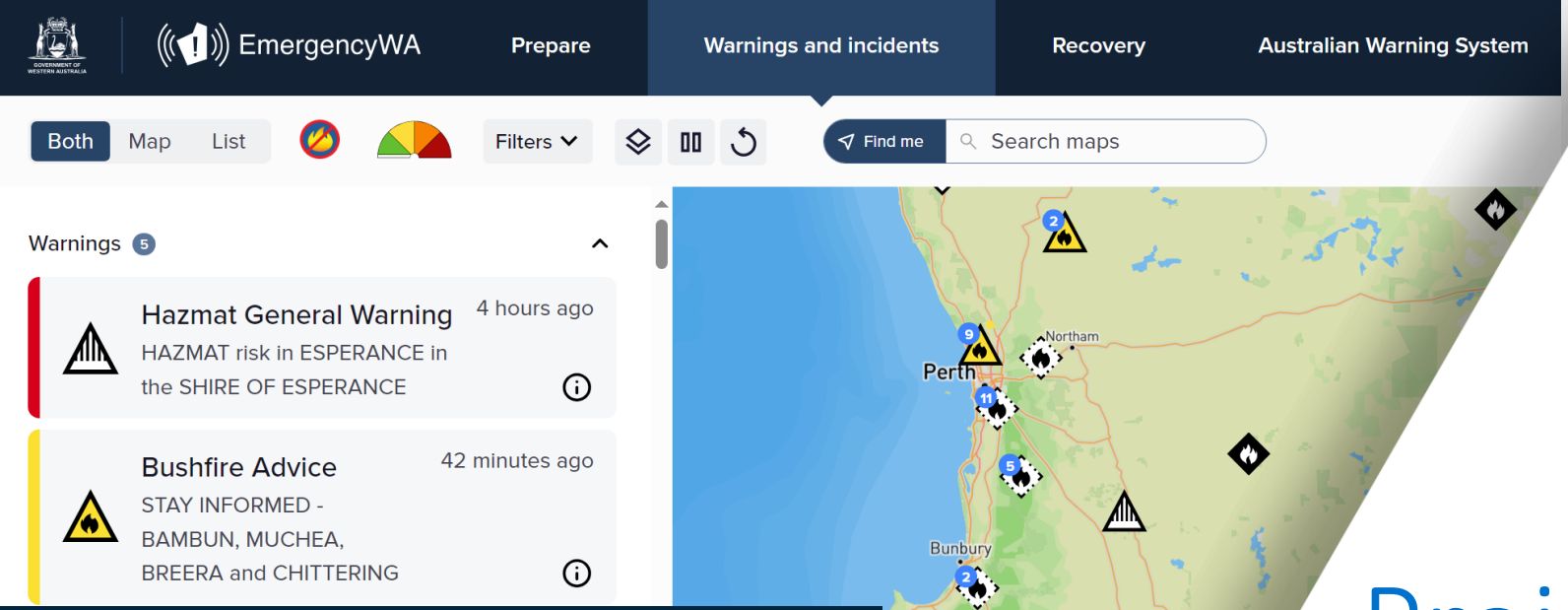
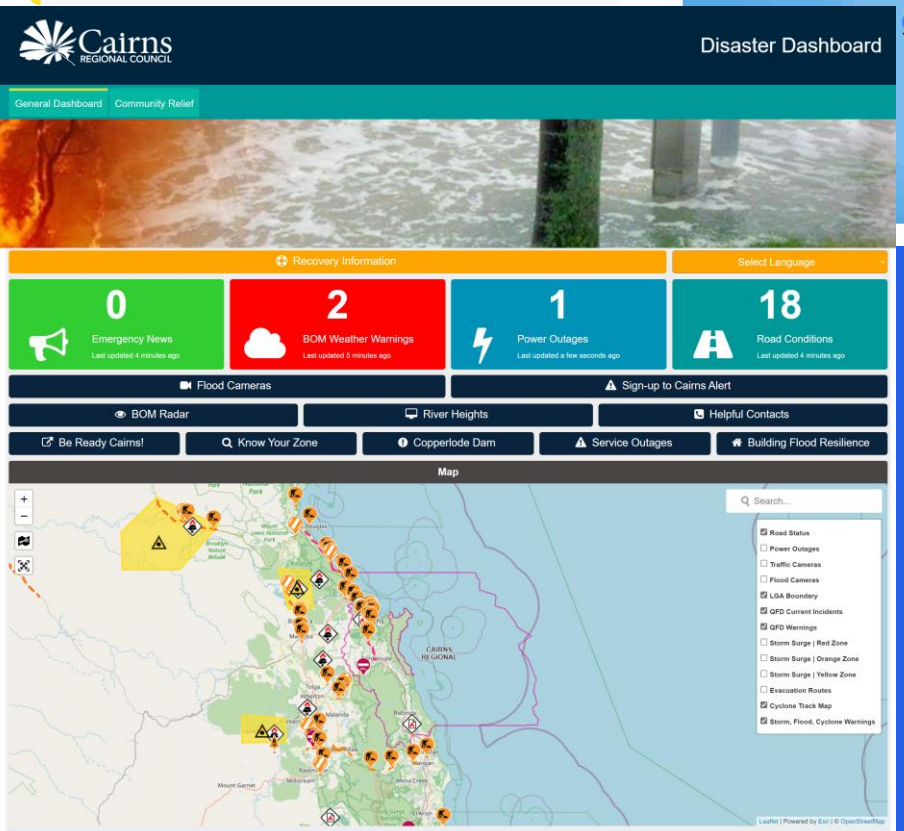
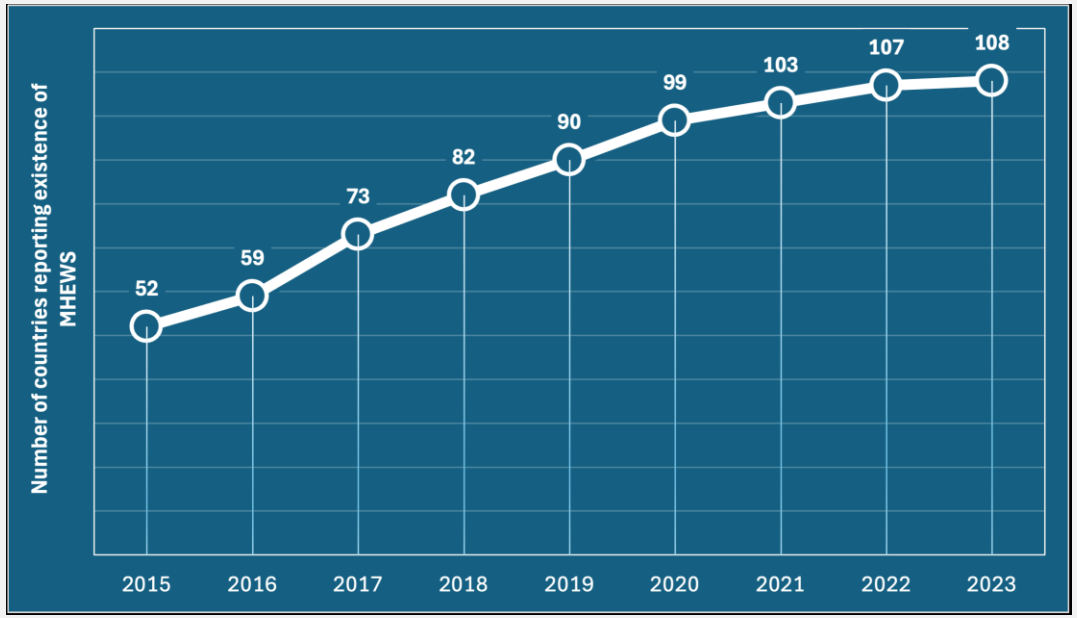




Project background & description

Context



Global status of multi-hazard early warning systems 2024 | UNDRR

Recommendation 13.6 – Exploring the development of a national, all-hazard warning app

Australian, state and territory governments should continue to explore the feasibility of a national, all-hazard emergency warning app.

(Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements)

Table 6: Common channels of communication when disseminating public information and warnings

CHANNEL	DESCRIPTION
WEBSITES AND APPS	Most statutory agencies responsible for warning communities provide incident information and current warnings on their official websites. Many also provide an application (app) for use on digital devices. Each app offers different functionality however, all allow users to see where warnings have been issued and to view those warnings. Some apps allow users to save watch zones for areas where they want to receive an immediate warning notification.
BROADCAST MEDIA	Radio and television broadcasters play a key role in the dissemination of warnings. From official emergency broadcasting of warnings to news bulletins and break-in messaging, and to provision of news ticker updates, broadcasters are a key partner in effective communication. Trained media liaison officers play an important role here, as they provide a two-way conduit for the media to connect with and can anticipate and assist with specific requests media outlets might have (e.g. coordination of interviews, capture of vision, or deadline-driven news).
DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA	The use of digital and social media, for example Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and various news feeds, continues to diversify and grow. These channels provide an easy way for community members to share public information and warnings with others in their network. Some social media platforms have also incorporated warning notification features. Most emergency services now utilise multiple social media channels to disseminate public information. These channels can also be used to monitor community response to warnings, gather local intelligence and situational awareness, and respond in a timely way to incoming questions or requests to clarify or elaborate upon information. Many broadcast and print media outlets also manage dynamic online media websites where public information and warnings can be shared in a timely fashion. Use of these channels for this purpose does not replace in any way the role of Triple 000 or any other call-taking and dispatch services.
TELEPHONE AND SHORT MESSAGE SERVICES (SMS)	Australia's national telephony alert system is known as Emergency Alert. It enables authorised emergency services to send an essential warning to landlines and mobile phones within a specific geographic area. This is sometimes referred to as a 'push' or 'intrusive' alert and no subscription or opt-in action is required of the public. This form of communication is generally reserved for highest-risk situations. Prior community education should encourage people to proactively seek information and not rely on receiving a text message or telephone warning. It is important to counteract unsafe assumptions that it is okay to wait to receive a personalised warning. Emergency Alert does have some limitations including: the length of text messages; limits to the number of concurrent campaigns; selection of phones to be contacted*; potential for delays in delivery; and reliance upon telecommunications infrastructure. Many agencies also offer telephone hotlines, so people can call and listen to the latest warnings or speak with a live operator for assistance. Private operators also host subscription-based telephone alert systems. * Landlines to be contacted are currently defined via billing address, which may differ to the location of the service. Similarly, mobiles are contacted if they are currently roaming within the warning area.

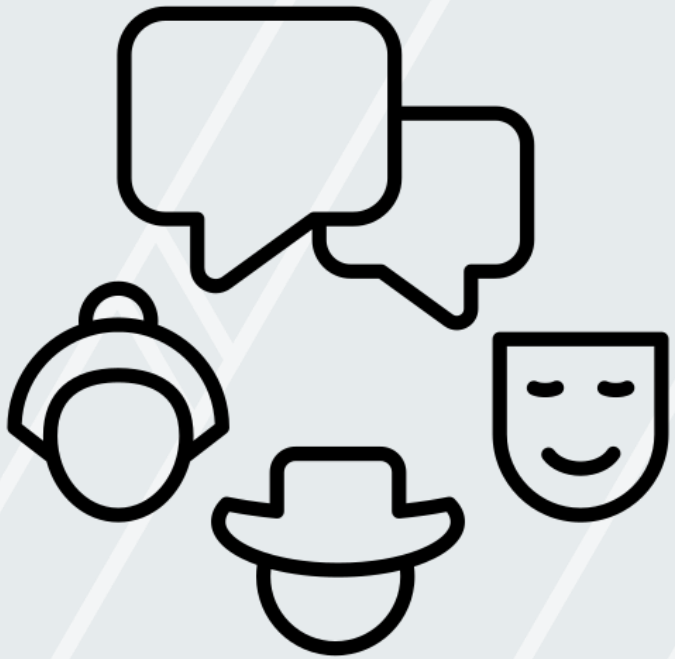
Table 6: Common channels of communication when disseminating public information and warnings cont.

CHANNEL	DESCRIPTION
FACE-TO-FACE	Face-to-face advice through community meetings or door-knocking can be highly effective, and in some scenarios, will be a necessity. Community meetings can be helpful to convey complex information and answer questions. Door-knocking can be useful in events where the hazard is difficult to see or comprehend (e.g. air pollution), where community engagement may be low, or where particular groups within the community are at higher risk. In areas with poor telephone and internet reception, door-knocking may be an essential communication channel. Direct liaison with community leaders can also offer a format to effectively disseminate information through locally trusted networks. Trained community liaison officers plan an important role in face-to-face engagement and dissemination.
SIRENS AND PUBLIC-ADDRESS SYSTEMS	A traditional form of alerting the public, sirens can play a role in alerting people to an incident and serve as a prompt to seek further information. Prior community education to encourage information-seeking behaviour when sirens sound is important. People should also be made aware they may not hear a siren and should not rely on this as their only trigger. Public address systems are an additional channel that may be available, particularly in cities or specific activity centres. They can be used to broadcast warnings to people in an immediate area. Many emergency service vehicles include both sirens and a capacity for amplified public-address. They should be noted as a further channel for communicating warnings.
PRINT MEDIA	In longer running incidents, print media can play an important role in raising awareness, providing detail and summarising the current situation. While less suitable for the issue of timely warnings in a fast-running event, this channel of communication should remain part of overall planning.
DISTRIBUTION LISTS	Establishing and using distribution lists (typically email lists) can be a targeted way to deliver warnings to specific organisations or people. Lists offer a way for agencies to communicate directly with target groups (e.g. media outlets, community service organisations, or real estate agents) who opt in to receive messages. They can be particularly useful where organisations might assist in the further dissemination of messages.
COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARDS	Community noticeboards can provide an important location to post regular updates or news bulletins about an incident. They can be particularly useful in longer running events, smaller communities or areas with limited access to technology and telecommunication.
ROADSIDE AND VARIABLE MESSAGE SIGNS	In some areas, and on many major roads, variable message signs (VMS) provide an option for communicating essential information. For example, a short message to turn on radios might enable motorists to be advised of an emergency or incident ahead. In rural areas or where other communication channels are limited or have been lost, roadside signs can play a key role and advise of any road closures.

What are we looking for?

Objective

- To explore **current and changing perceptions and usage** of multi-hazard public information and warning platforms amongst Australian communities
  - focus on **usability, comprehension and accessibility for all communities** – including all generations, people with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with disabilities and those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.



What are we looking for?

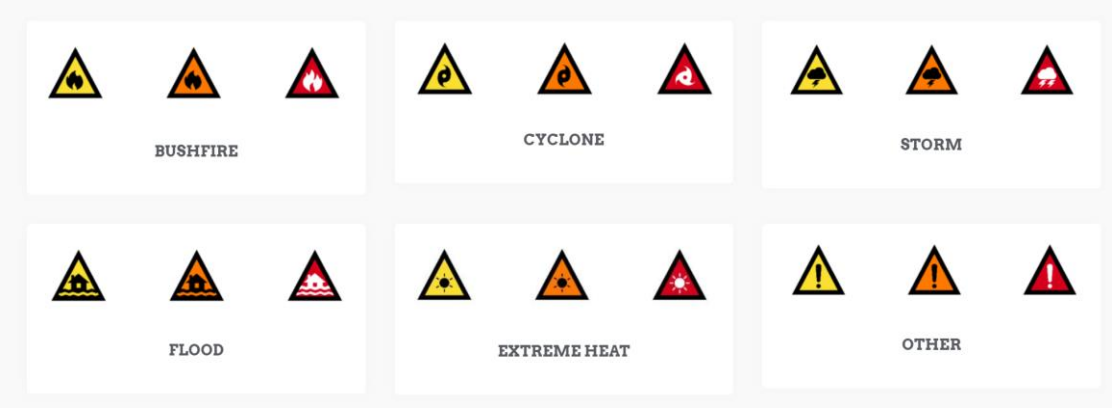
Anticipated outcomes

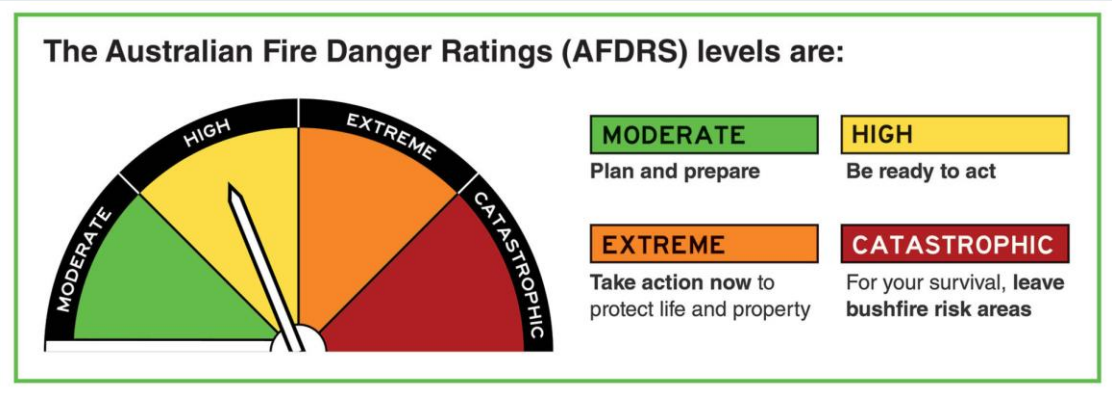
This research project will improve national capability for public information and warnings in a range of ways. It will:

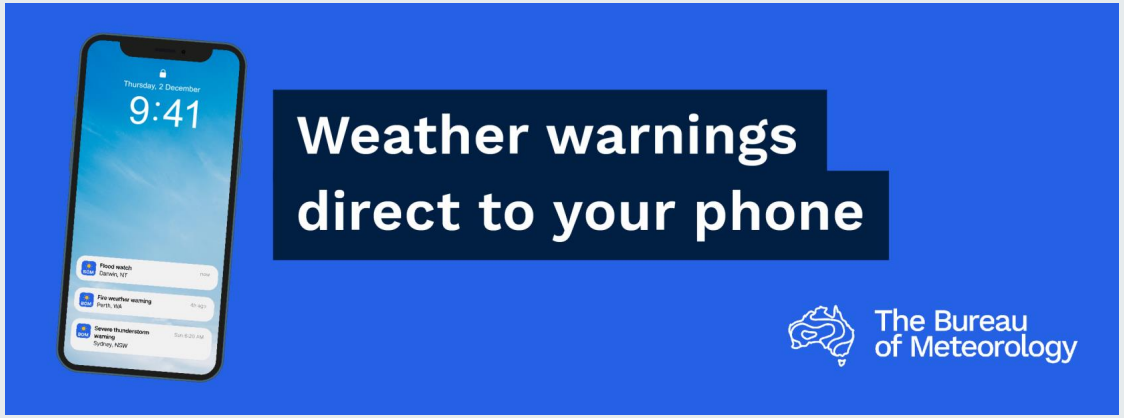
- **Enhance understanding** of communities' hazard and emergency communication needs, preferences and capabilities
- Improve and **increase the reach of public information and warnings** for all Australians and those visiting Australia
- Inform the design and utilisation of multi-hazard public information and warnings platforms through the **development of principles, guidelines, standards or frameworks**

What do we need to know more about?

- Conditions under which platforms might overwhelm people with information
- How people receive, understand and use:
  - different warnings in interaction
  - multiple AWS Calls to Action in one location
- Extent of community reach & ‘fit’ with informal warning sharing tools
- Interactions with third-party platforms
- Community engagement and education
- Future communication preferences







What will the project do?

Systematic analysis**

- current state of multi-hazard public information and warning platforms knowledge and practice

Empirical research

- examine the usability, comprehension and accessibility of these platforms for all communities

Publication and translation

- Publish and translate research findings leading to their implementation

**National knowledge sharing forum to inform the systematic analysis.

Expected outputs

Core Outputs

- → Co-developed research plan
- → A national knowledge sharing forum
- → Systematic analysis report/s
- → Final report
- → Research utilisation plan & product
- → Stakeholder presentation/s
- → Academic publications

Expected outputs (cont.)

Additional outputs

- Quarterly progress reports
- Project utilisation plan
- Project evaluation report
- Relevant communications outputs including, but not limited to, presentations and a hazard note

- Also, we welcome any innovative outputs that your team can deliver to address the outcomes.

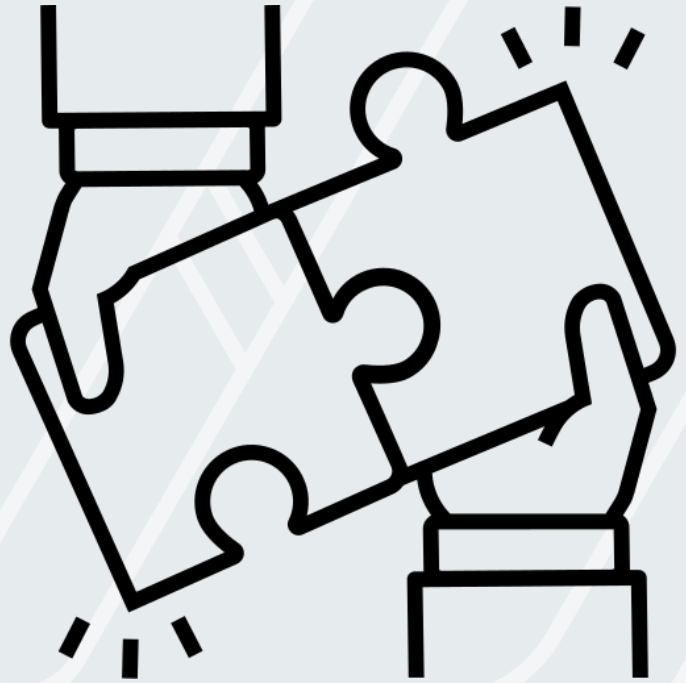
Collaborative approach

Researchers are expected to undertake the research using a collaborative approach to:

→ assist in the translation and transfer of knowledge to end-users

→ ensure the project meets their needs.

Researchers are encouraged to outline their approach to ensure effective collaboration, which could include embedding researchers within end-user organisations for a period of time.



Budget and timeframe

- Total project budget $400,000 - $600,000
- 2 ½ year timeframe
  - 2 years research project delivery
  - 6 months research translation

Governance and reporting

Governance

- One lead provider for contracting purposes
- Contract is with NHRA
- Project Management Committee
- Steering Committee/Ref Group
- Regular meetings

Reporting

- Project plan
- Milestone delivery
- Quarterly progress reports
- Project evaluation report
- Stakeholder presentations

EOI process

Project and EOI information (including FAQs)
is available on the Centre website:

https://www.naturalhazards.com.au/research/research-projects/multi-hazard-public-information-and-warning-platforms-future

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Centre contact	For any questions regarding this Call for EOIs, please email research@naturalhazards.com.au
Submission of EOI	EOIs must be prepared using the Centre's EOI submission form EOIs are to be submitted to research@naturalhazards.com.au by **5pm (AEDT) on Wednesday 11 December 2024**

Multi-hazard public information and warning platforms for the future

Photo: Natural Haza

Research theme
Situational awareness

Project type
Core research

Project status
Expressions of Interest

This project aims to understand how multi-hazard public information and warning platforms contribute to public safety within a broader risk communication framework, seeking to explore future communication innovations and capabilities. The research will focus on usability, comprehension, and accessibility for all communities – including those from all generations, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with disability and those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

This project is currently open for Expressions of Interest.

Project teams responding to this call for Expressions of Interest (see PDF in top-right corner) are required to submit their response using the Centre's current EOI submission form.

Download Expression of Interest

Download EOI submission form

Download Budget Template

Making a submission

- **Must use the EOI Submission Form template**
- Statement of capability
- Statement about the diversity of the project team
- Statement about the project's inclusion and respect of First Nations peoples
- Outline - describing how the project team intends to approach the project
- Indicative schedule of work and interim milestones/project outputs
- A proposed project budget, including details of any in-kind contribution from research organisation/s
- **Must use the EOI Budget Template**
- **Must specify any changes required to the proposed contract form**
- **Must adhere to specified word limits**

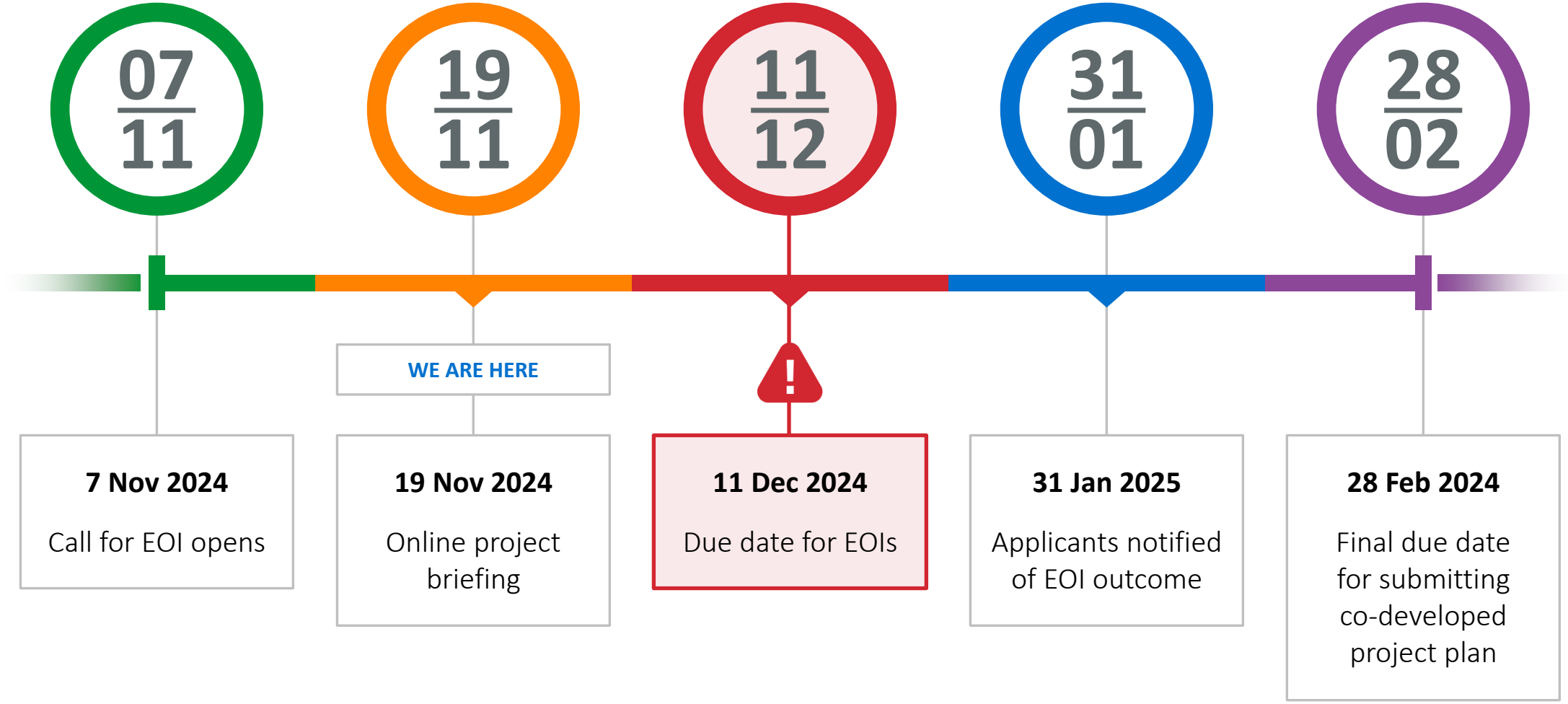
Making a submission

- clear statement describing the outcomes
- clear statement describing the outputs
- statement demonstrating the project team’s relevant stakeholder engagement
- a risk management statement
- any requested changes to the Centre's proposed form of contract
- up to two-page CVs for each proposed project team member.

EOI assessment

Evaluation criterion	% weighting
Research capability: the capacity and capability to deliver an excellent research project in an Australian environment	**25**
Project approach: a demonstrated understanding of the project requirements and a proposed project approach and methodology that is appropriate, feasible and robust	**20**
Project outcomes and outputs: demonstrate a high-level understanding of the intentions of the project and how outputs/outcomes translate to practice	**20**
Industry engagement: strong track record of industry engagement with the ability to support and influence Australian disaster management at a national or state/territory level through interaction with key stakeholders and plans to adopt a collaborative approach throughout the project	**15**
Value for money: delivery of required outcome within available budget along with the ability to leverage the funds provided with in-kind contributions or supplementary opportunities	**20**

Making a submission – key dates



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Thank you

research@naturalhazards.com.au

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